



To be submitted to the Council at its meeting on 18th July 2024

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

20th March 2024 at 6.00pm

Present:

Councillor Hudson (in the Chair)
Councillors Croft, Morland (substitute for Haggis) and Wilson.

Officers in attendance:

- John Allen (Principal Social Worker – Adult Services)
- Geoff Barnes (Deputy Director of Public Health)
- Paul Bassett (Assistant Director for Adult Social Services)
- Katie Brown (Director of Adult Social Services)
- Liz Brummer (Strategic Lead – Finance)
- Zoe Campbell (Senior Scrutiny and Committee Advisor)
- Stephen McGrath (Strategic Special Projects Lead – Communities)
- Joanne Robinson (Assistant Director Policy, Strategy and Resources)
- Paul Thorpe (Operations Director EQUANS)

Also in attendance:

- Councillor Shreeve (Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care)
- Karen Grimsby (Operational Manager, Northern Lincolnshire and Goole NHS Foundation Trust)
- Gemma Mazingham (Integrated Care Board)

There were no members of the press or public present at the meeting.

SPH.52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence for this meeting were received from Councillors Haggis, Sandford and K Swinburn.

SPH.53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received in respect of any item on the agenda for this meeting.

SPH.54 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel meeting held on the 31st January 2024 be agreed as an accurate record.

SPH.55 QUESTION TIME

There were no questions from members of the public for this panel meeting.

SPH.56 FORWARD PLAN

The panel received the current Forward Plan and members were asked to identify any items for examination by this Panel via the pre-decision call-in procedure.

RESOLVED – That the Forward Plan be noted.

SPH.57 TRACKING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF SCRUTINY

The panel received a report from the Statutory Scrutiny Officer tracking the recommendations previously made by this scrutiny panel, which was updated for reference at this meeting.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPH.58 DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS

The panel received a report providing them with an update on the delivery of the Housing Assistance Policy and associated action plan which aims to improve performance in respect of Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) applications.

A member was concerned that if the council did not have any input into Longhurst and Havelock Property referrals then residents could be waiting too long. Mr McGrath explained that the process and price schedule for LHP was consistent with the price schedule agreed by EQUANS with the contractors and this price schedule was updated every year. LHP could now carry out DFG adaption work on their own properties. They were prioritising urgent ones and cases in the same streets, so they were working efficiently . He confirmed that EQUANS would carry out quality assurance checks on the work and also ensure the work was in accordance with the agreed pricing structure.

A member referred to the timelines and delivery for the occupational health and installation performance and would have expected to see more progress. Mr McGrath explained that the timelines were being impacted by applicants who had been on the waiting list for a period of time. However, the total number of non-urgent cases had come down because of the new delivery mechanisms. They were now work in progress and had therefore been removed from the waiting list.

Recruitment of staff was a concern for members who queried what the latest picture was. Ms Grimsby highlighted that there were still issues with recruitment but reassured the panel that they were still getting through the waiting list. She explained that clinical staff were involved in helping non-clinical staff by reviewing the plans. The team was also training staff up through the “grown your own” qualified occupational therapist staff scheme.

Councillor Shreeve reflected on his own frustration about the rate of progress in the past but had taken comfort from the progress made to date through the housing providers carrying out their own adaptations, the change to financial limits where people could qualify for minor work adaptations, plus the number of people on the waiting list had reduced. He was confident that with the new delivery methods in place, the panel would see further improvements over the coming months.

A member referred to shower pods. They asked if they were useful and queried if they should have been an option before because of the length of time shower rooms take to build/adapt. Ms Grimsby explained that historically they were prone to leak, and some had been removed. However, as technology had moved on, officers were looking at them again as an option for appropriate applicants who were happy to use them.

Whilst the panel welcomed the progress made, they felt there was still a long way to go to reduce the number of people waiting for assessment and adaptations. The panel agreed to carry this forward to the next municipal year and continue to receive progress updates.

RESOLVED –

1. That the report be noted.
2. That the panel continue to receive progress updates at future meetings as part of its work programme.

SPH.59 QUARTER 3 – COUNCIL PLAN RESOURCES AND FINANCE REPORT

The panel received a report from the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economy, Net Zero, Skills and Housing and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Resources and Assets providing key information and analysis of the Council's position and performance.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPH.60 COUNCIL REFRESH PLAN

The panel received a report from the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Economy, Net Zero, Skills and Housing on the above.

A member was concerned about timings of the report and suggested that it should have come to scrutiny before it was adopted by Council.

Ms Robinson agreed and confirmed that the next consultation would follow the same process as the budget where all scrutiny panel members would be invited to one scrutiny panel meeting to scrutinise the council plan refresh before Council.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPH.61 ADULT SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND OMBUDSMAN REPORT 2022-2023

The adult social care services annual complaints and Ombudsman report for 2022-23 was received and there was challenge by members over the number of complaints and how these were being addressed.

The panel appreciated that the figures were a few months behind and were reassured by officers that a new reporting timescale had been agreed with the ICB which would enable the panel to scrutinise more update and timely information and would include the ombudsman referrals and the number of enquiries from the ombudsman where they investigated but didn't take the complaint forward.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPH.62 HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL - WORK PROGRAMME

The panel considered, within its terms of reference, agenda items to be included in the 2024/25 work programme.

The panel felt the work programme for 2023/24 achieved their objectives.

The areas of focus suggested for 2024/25 were:

- The discharge out of hospital in particular back to other neighbouring local authority areas, where the hold ups appeared to be.
- Dentistry oral health in young children and the long-term effects on their health.
- EMAS response times were of a concern and the panel wanted to see the latest response figures.
- Safeguarding Adults; the panel requested the baseline data so they could establish where to start from for reassurance that vulnerable adults were being safeguarded.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPH.63 CQC REGULATION AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE

The panel received a report and update from the Director of Adult Social Care on the feedback from the adult social care peer review that took place in January 2024 and how that impacted on the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel when the CQC inspection took place.

A member queried how many people were on the waiting list for care assessments. Ms Brown explained that there were three entry points at present to the front door of adult social care, which risks hand offs to other services. Officers were looking at making the process more effective by ensuring that when people entered the front door, one person supported them throughout.

Members queried how officers knew it was not a good experience. Ms Brown confirmed that people tell us as part of the feedback that was requested from everyone who had been supported by Focus. However, this was developing as part of the co-production approach of working with 'people with lived experience' to help shape services and pathways in the future.

The difficulty to recruit to care roles was a concern to members and they asked how this was being tackled. Ms Brown highlighted the Health Care Partnership (HCP) workforce group that was looking at recruitment issues across the whole system and working together to ensure that we maximised opportunities for North East Lincolnshire. A recent example was a recruitment fair that took place at the beginning of 2024 for people who relocated from abroad and, as a result, a number of people were recruited.

Members were concerned about people with disabilities who did not want direct payments for their care because they were worried they could fall behind with payments and queried how did the system help this cohort of people. Ms Brown explained that people could be given prepaid cards to support with this. The key was to ensure that people

had the information about Direct Payments so that they could make an informed choice.

Referring to the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) annual report recently received at a panel meeting, members raised their concerns that the report was too long and the information about the effectiveness of safeguarding was not easy to find and navigate. Ms Brown agreed and referenced the discussion that took place at the previous scrutiny panel where there was an agreement that the next SAB annual report would be redesigned to reflect the changes to the SAB strategic plan.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

SPH.64 QUESTIONS TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

There were no questions for the portfolio holder at this meeting.

SPH.65 CALLING IN OF DECISIONS

There were no formal requests from Members of this panel to call in decisions taken at recent meetings of Cabinet.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.